



MILFORD FIRE DEPARTMENT

~2005 REPORT~

Richard J. Pauley
Fire Chief

Once again it is my pleasure to submit the Annual Report of the Milford Fire Department. As in previous years, this report for the year 2005 will outline where your Fire Department has been successful and present areas that need attention.

ACTIVITY LEVEL

The Milford Fire Department responded to a total of 1,055 requests for assistance in 2005. This was a slight decrease of 15 calls as compared to 2004. This activity level can attributed to the continued growth of the Town and, as such, we need to take the necessary steps to prepare this Department for the correlating increase in activity in order to best serve you and meet your needs. In 2005, we performed more than 10,600 hours of activity in supporting requests for assistance (emergency and non-emergency) and training.

With the cold weather upon us, please ensure your furnace or boiler is operating efficiently and safely. This will help reduce your overall energy costs and make sure potentially harmful carbon monoxide gas is not present in your home. In addition, if you heat with wood make sure your chimney is clean (we recommend at least two cleanings a year, more if you use your woodstove on a daily basis) and maintain sufficient clearance to combustible materials. And, above all, PLEASE have a minimum of at least one working smoke detector on each level of your home. As always, should you have any questions or concerns on any other fire prevention matter, please don't hesitate to contact us.

At the present time the Department is made up of four full-time employees (Fire Chief, Fire Inspector, Training Officer and Administrative Assistant) and 38 very dedicated and well-trained on-call personnel. The full-time personnel are responsible for the administrative, fire prevention, training and preventative maintenance issues that need to be handled on a daily basis as well as respond to emergencies during the weekday.

I am proud to report that Milford continues to be the largest community in the State that is still served by a predominantly "on-call" fire department which continues to save the taxpayers well over \$900,000.00 annually in full-time payroll costs. However, it is increasingly evident that we are experiencing a shortage of daytime fire/rescue personnel due to employment obligations and we must provide additional weekday staffing for this Department.

TRAINING

All Department members are required to obtain State Firefighter Level I and rescue certification within one year of joining the Department. In addition, each member is required to make a minimum of two drills a month (company training and rescue related). We continue to improve and expand our skills as a result of ever changing circumstances to include updated hazardous materials, technical rescue and other specialized training. Twenty-five members earned their incident command system certification in 2005. Three members obtained their certifications in rescue systems/urban systems rescue and two members became apparatus driver/operator qualified. Overall, members of the Department participated in over 2,450 hours of training.

FIRE PREVENTION

The Fire Prevention Division was very busy in 2005, again as a result of the continued growth of the Town. Major projects reviewed and completed included the Hampshire Dome, Cahill Place, Stop & Shop retail plaza, Giorgio's Restaurant, Heron Pond Elementary School addition, four major residential developments (Patch Hill, Lee-An Drive, Singer Brook and Wyman Lane). Each of these projects (or buildings to include single family residences) requires numerous inspections for initial site work, underground tanks, heating and mechanical equipment, fire alarm/fire protection systems and final certificates of occupancy. Accordingly, significant time is required to inspect (and in many cases re-inspect) these occupancies as well as the existing buildings and occupancies that require annual life safety/fire prevention compliance review within the community.

Overall, this Department issued 290 alarm system permits, 8 oil burning equipment permits, 323 gas permits, 22 assembly permits, 16 blasting permits, 72 underground tank permits, 62 miscellaneous/other permits and 654 outdoor burning permits. In addition, 774 other life safety and fire prevention inspections/contacts were made and 16 fire and lockdown drills were conducted. I continue to be very proud of our highly successful public education programs in both the elementary and middle schools. The "Learn Not To Burn" and "Risk Watch" education programs are highly acclaimed and well received by our young people and educators within the school system. We are recognized statewide for our efforts in this area and have developed an outstanding educational partnership between the Milford schools and Fire Department; with our children being the true winners in this regard. My personal thanks to Captain Flaherty, Captain Smedick, and the staff of both the elementary and middle schools for their hard work throughout the year in our school age education efforts.

APPARATUS AND FACILITY

Apparatus - As previously reported we experienced significant issues with Engine 2, our 2003 Pierce Dash pumper, over the last two and a half years inclusive of pump and transfer case problems resulting in the return of this truck to the manufacturer. Subsequent negotiations resulted in an agreement with Pierce Manufacturing to build the Town a new pumper/engine in accordance with our specifications to replace the 2003 model. In addition, at last year's Town Meeting, the voters approved the purchase of a new pumper/engine to replace Engine 3, our aging 1982 Mack. Many Department members worked hard throughout the year at developing specifications for the construction of these two engines spending hundreds of hours reviewing information and

design concepts from various fire apparatus manufacturers. I am pleased to report that in May the Town entered into agreements for the delivery of two Pierce Enforcer model, 1500 gallon per minute pumpers, equipped with Class A and B foam systems. With the delivery of these two new engines in early 2006, the overall condition of the fleet will be excellent. The only immediate need, in terms of apparatus, will be to address electrical, rust and corrosion issues with Ladder 1, our 1991 Pierce aerial. In 2007, we will be asking for your approval to partially refurbish this truck, which should extend the life of this critical piece of apparatus by 15 years or more.

Fire Station - As has been outlined since 1997, we need to address the facility (space) needs of this Department. We have outgrown the existing Fire Station due to insufficient apparatus storage space, office and training area and storage rooms. Other issues include public access to the apparatus floor, which presents a number of safety and security issues. The most cost effective and logical solution to this issue is expansion of the existing Fire Station, which must be accomplished in the very near future. The present Station was built in 1974 and was projected to meet the needs of the community for 25 years. We are now into year 32 and must enlarge this facility.

Substation and Training Area - In addition, the Town is in need of a substation at the west end of Town and we believe that the Town-owned BROX property is the best location for this satellite facility to include a small training area so that Department members are able to effectively train and maintain their skills. Milford is recognized as a very desirable community to live in, and as its growth continues, we must provide essential public safety (fire, ambulance and police) services to include additional personnel and adequate facilities.

ADMINISTRATION

The year 2005 saw some significant changes in the Department with respect to personnel. In April, Deputy Chief Kendall Hawes retired after 38 years of exceptional service and dedication to the Town. Deputy Hawes service included Firefighter, Company Officer, Fire Prevention Officer, elected Fire Ward and culminated his career as Deputy Chief. Captain Timothy Cullinan was promoted to Deputy Chief with Deputy Hawes's retirement. Lt. Jeff Carter was promoted to Engine Company Captain and Firefighter Brett French was promoted to Engine Company Lieutenant. Each of these individuals is very capable and competent and I am pleased that each has accepted leadership roles in this Department.

During 2005, the Ambulance Efficiency Study Committee spent considerable time reviewing the efficiencies and operations of the Milford Ambulance Service as directed by the Board of Selectmen. As part of this review the Fire Chief and Ambulance Director were asked to give substantial input into the present and future emergency response needs of the community for both fire and emergency medical services. This included response/activity levels, staffing needs, quality and level of service, retention of present call/volunteer staff and operations. After detailed review the Committee recommended to the Board of Selectmen that the Town merge the Fire Department and Ambulance Service into one department to better meet the needs of the Town. I support this recommendation as it provides many advantages particularly with respect to efficiencies of both departments, staffing and emergency response capabilities and enhanced quality of service to the community.

In closing, thank you for your continued strong support of your Fire Department. The future of this Department is very bright and we will continue to do our very best to meet your needs and expectations. However, as a community we must recognize that this Department is at a critical juncture with respect to adequate daytime personnel staffing and facilities and must address deficiencies in both these areas now. With respect to the daytime coverage in the next four years we will most likely need to add three or four more full-time personnel to meet our daytime response needs and workload. On many days we are receiving multiple requests for assistance, which the majority of our on-call personnel are not able to respond to because of employment obligations. In addition, as has been outlined previously, we need to address the shortage of space at the Fire Station which can best be solved with an addition to the existing building and need to construct a substation to protect the rapidly growing west side of Town.

Finally, above all I would like to recognize the hard work and dedication of the members of your Fire Department who are continuously serving our community with pride. Our firefighters make themselves available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week, at significant personal sacrifice. Their commitment to protecting our community comes at great expense with many sleepless nights, time away from their loved ones and in many cases financial cost. Their dedication is nothing short of remarkable and I thank each of them for another very successful year. On behalf of the Milford Fire Department, have a happy and safe 2006.

Respectfully submitted,

Richard J. Pauley, Jr., Fire Chief

2005 Incident Reports

<u>Calls by Situation Found</u>	<u>Total</u>	<u>Hazardous Condition Calls</u>	<u>Total</u>
Building fires	7	Electrical malfunction/overheat/sparking	13
Chimney fires	2	Power lines down	5
Cooking fire/confined	7	Water problem/evacuation	6
Oil burner/boiler malfunction	5	Gas leak/natural or liquid propane	8
Vehicle fires	9	Flammable or combustible fuel spill/leak	13
Brush/woodland/outside fire	9	Hazardous conditions	2
Dumpster/rubbish fire	3	Hazardous materials leak/spill	6
Illegal/non permit fire	21	Weather emergency/standby	5
Fire/other miscellaneous	9	Suspicious package/citizen assist/other	20
Authorized/control burn	19	agency assist	
Good intent call/mistaken for smoke/other	51		
		<u>Alarm Activations</u>	
		Alarm activation/smoke removal	121
		Alarm activation system malfunction	61
		Unintentional alarm transmission	51
		Carbon monoxide alarm	12
		Malicious false alarm	14
		Service calls/assist public/non-emergency	411
		Total calls for 2005	1,055
<u>Mutual Aid Given</u>			
Mutual aid given/building/brush /station coverage	20		
<u>Rescue Calls</u>			
Medical/ambulance assist	26		
Vehicle accident/general cleanup	57		
Motor vehicle accident/injuries	17		
Motor vehicle accident/extrication	10		
Extrication/ice rescue/below grade	35		
rescue/search/other assist			

Decrease of 15 calls in 2005 compared to year 2004